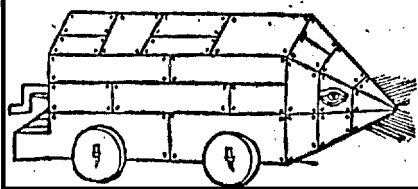


## LETTERS

## COUNTER-INTELLIGENCE

To the Editors:

Gar Alperovitz (Sept. 8) speaks of Allen Dulles's myopia while exhibiting a choice myopia of his own. You don't have to be Barry Goldwater to see the folly of ascribing the Cold War to our having hurt Joseph Stalin's feelings. One could come away from a reading of Professor Alperovitz's "review" believing Stalin to have been little more than a benign comrade-in-arms twitted by a US intelligence officer's ambitions. If only we had played it square with the man, there would have been no Iron Curtain, no enslavement of Eastern Europe. He would have trusted us then. . . . This is the hair shirt many American liberals still like to don, but it implies a mis-reading of history just as simplistic as the devil theory of communism cherished by many American conservatives. Certainly Dulles's mission was a diplomatic boner and certainly he should have been fired for countermanding Roosevelt's orders, but to credit him with the great tragedy of the Cold War gives him a stature, and Stalin a benevolence, that could serve only Charles de Gaulle.



To the Editors:

Surely the time has come to blow the whistle before the current outburst of revisionism regarding the origins of the cold war goes much further. In your issue of September 8, Mr. Gar Alperovitz, in effect, blames the Soviet decision to turn against the west on poor old Allen Dulles and his part in arranging the surrender of the German armies in Italy. By his handling of this affair, Mr. Alperovitz concludes, "Dulles helped set in motion the events that we know as the Cold War."

Mr. Alperovitz is a gifted young historian: But it is a hopelessly shallow interpretation of the Soviet Union to suppose that "suspicions arising from these events in early 1945" led to the Russian decision to abandon the wartime coalition. It is also an interpretation which does little credit to the seriousness of the Russian leaders. Stalin and his associates were, after all, Marxists. They regarded the United

States as anything Allen Dulles did, but because the United States was the leading capitalist power. The very existence of the United States was, by definition, a menace to Soviet security. Nothing the United States could have done in 1945 would have dispelled Stalin's mistrust—short of the conversion of the United States into a Stalinist despotism, and even this would not have sufficed, as the experience of Yugoslavia and China later showed, unless it were accompanied by total subservience to Moscow. So long as the United States remained a capitalist democracy, given Stalin's rigid theology, no American policy could win basic Soviet confidence, and every American initiative was poisoned from the source.

The wartime collaboration was created by one thing, and one thing alone: the threat of Nazi victory. So long as this threat was real, collaboration continued. The Yalta conference, which took place in the shadow of the Rundstedt counteroffensive in the Ardennes, was the last expression of the wartime mood. In the weeks after Yalta the military situation changed with great rapidity. With Nazi Germany shattered the need for cooperation was disappearing. The Soviet Union therefore began the post-war political battle for Europe, moving quickly to violate the pledges it had just made at Yalta for political freedom in Poland and Rumania.

The definitive proof of the Soviet change of line was, of course, the article by Jacques Duclos in the April 1945 issue of *Cahiers du Communisme*. This article, with its savage attack on "Browderism"—i.e., the policy of post-war support for bourgeois democratic governments, like that of Franklin Roosevelt—was plainly an authoritative announcement by the Comintern official formerly responsible for the western Communist parties that the period of anti-fascist collaboration was over. The Duclos piece must obviously have been planned and scheduled at least six or eight weeks before its publication—that is, well before Allen Dulles began to negotiate for the surrender of the German armies in Italy, well before Franklin Roosevelt died, and many months before Harry Truman ordered that the atomic bomb be dropped on Japan. William Z. Foster, who replaced Browder as leader of the American Communist Party and brought the CPUSA policy into line with Moscow, later boasted of having said in January 1944, "A post-war Roosevelt administration would continue to be, as it is now, an imperialist government." The Soviet "change" of line was the direct result of two things: (1) this intransigent Marxist view of the United States, which had been submerged but not altered during the war; and (2) the approaching end of the war, which brought the Soviet Union to the point of no return.

The United States government may be pursuing strange policies in Vietnam, but the intellectual community, in an excess of remorse, suppose that the United States—or even the CIA—has been responsible for everything that has gone wrong in the world in the last twenty years. The record shows beyond dispute that Allen Dulles did not start the cold war.

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Arthur Schlesinger's statement of the doctrine of historical inevitability helps set the terms of debate over the origins of the Cold War. He writes: "One thing, and one thing alone," permitted wartime Soviet-American cooperation; "nothing" could have dispelled Stalin's mistrust; "no" American policy could have won confidence; "every" American initiative was poisoned from the source. Since Stalin's "rigid theology" required him to start a battle for Europe, American activities could have played no substantial role in the beginning of the Cold War.

In my review of *The Secret Surrender* I argued neither that Allen Dulles started the Cold War, nor that the United States has been responsible for everything which has gone wrong in the last twenty years. What I wrote was quite specific: "The Cold War cannot be understood simply as an American response to a Soviet challenge, but rather as the insidious interaction of mutual suspicions, blame for which must be shared by all." As an illustration I pointed out we now have evidence that Dulles's secret 1945 negotiations with the Nazis undermined American-Soviet relations in much the same way as did the later U-2 incident.

One approach to a discussion of differing interpretations of the Cold War is to recall the view urged by Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson in 1945: He held, contrary to Mr. Schlesinger's idea, that the United States had it in its power profoundly to influence post-war relations with the Soviet Union. This responsibility, he believed, demanded that provocative actions be avoided. Arguing against the hawks of his day—especially on European matters—Stimson urged "the greatest care and the greatest patience and the greatest thoughtfulness." By the time of his resignation, however, he had lost the debate. And on nuclear matters he was dismayed to find Secretary of State Eyrnes "very much against any attempt to cooperate with Russia. . . ."

Most observers agree the major turning point of the Cold War came in 1947. What happened earlier? Stimson was aware the tough line had won out.

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